



# Nature Notes

Journal of the Webster Groves Nature Study Society, December 2007, Vol. 79, No. 10  
First Issue November 1929

## PRESIDENT'S CORNER – Ann Earley

It's hard to believe, but holiday time is here once again. As in years past, WGNSS will not have a program meeting in December, but will instead **celebrate the holidays** at an open house with the St. Louis Audubon Society. This year's event will be held on Sunday afternoon, **December 2 from 1:30-4:00** at the Dennis and Judith Jones Visitor and Education Center in Forest Park. **See p. 2 for more details.**

Although WGNSS will not have a program meeting in January, you will not want to miss the special speakers and program topics we have planned for the following months. You will find further details about these events in the upcoming issues of *Nature Notes*, so stay tuned for more information!

Highway 40 may be changing in the new year, but our location for WGNSS general program meetings will not. We will continue to meet at the St. Louis County Library headquarters on Lindbergh in 2008, beginning with the March program meeting.

As described in greater detail in an article elsewhere in this newsletter, the WGNSS Board has voted to allocate \$878,333 of the \$3 million Holcim settlement to two land acquisitions in Missouri, one in Jefferson County and one in Perry County. This action concludes the part of the settlement relating to Missouri land acquisition funding. Many thanks to Yvonne Homeyer for representing WGNSS during this allocation process, and for the countless hours she has spent representing our Society as the Holcim situation has evolved during the last several years.

On behalf of the other officers and Board members, I wish all WGNSS members a holiday season filled with all the things you enjoy!

## MESSAGE FROM THE TREASURER

Please look at your label to note the expiration date of your membership. If the date is 31-08-2007, this is the last newsletter you will receive. Please renew your membership by mailing your check to WGNSS to our P.O. Box. If you think there's an error in your dues expiration date, please call our Treasurer, Michael Olson, at 577-5160 (day) or 481-3301 (eve.).

**CELEBRATE THE HOLIDAYS IN FOREST PARK**  
**Sunday, December 2, 2007 from 1:30-4:00 p.m.**

The Webster Groves Nature Study Society will once again be gathering with the St. Louis Audubon Society to celebrate the holidays, this year at the Dennis and Judith Jones Visitor and Education Center in Forest Park. This special event will be held on Sunday, December 2 from 1:30 to 4:00 p.m. in the Trolley Room at the Visitor Center.

Please bring a ready-to-serve appetizer or dessert to share. Beverages will be provided.

Drawings will be held during the afternoon for attendance prizes, so remember to register for the drawings when you arrive. Members may also wish to explore Forest Park by taking a nature hike or bird walk.

The Visitor Center, at 5595 Grand Drive, was originally built in 1892 as the Lindell Pavilion streetcar shelter and is recognized for its distinctive Spanish architecture and clock tower. The Visitor Center is located on the north side of the park near the Missouri Historical Society and the Muny.

We hope to see you there!

**HOT OFF THE PRESS**

WGNSS author and Lifetime Achievement Award winner Jim Jackson has just published a new book, entitled Views From the Back Forty. WGNSS members will recognize many of the names, places and events Jim writes about in his newest book, available just in time for the holidays! Jim's book is currently available at the Shaw Nature Reserve Visitor Center and at the Garden Gate Shop at the Missouri Botanical Garden. For further information about the book, please call Jim at 636-433-2433.

Other books by Jim on the WGNSS author list are:

The Biography of a Tree (1979)

Pulse of the Forest (1980)

Passages of a Stream: A Chronicle of the Meramec (1984)

**KATHERINE CHAMBERS MEMORIAL – John Christensen**

A memorial service honoring Katherine Chambers, a long-time member of the Entomology Group, was held at the Kemper Garden Center, Missouri Botanical Garden on Sunday, November 11. An abbreviated obituary for Katherine was printed in the May, 2007 issue of *Nature Notes*, and a more complete obituary in the *St. Louis Post Dispatch* in its April 8, 2007 issue, Metro Section.



## HOLCIM SETTLEMENT MONEY ALLOCATED FOR MISSOURI LAND PROJECTS

Yvonne Homeyer

Two projects, one in Jefferson County and one in Perry County, received the WGNSS Board's vote for allocating \$878,333 of the three million dollar Holcim settlement funds.

LaBarque Creek Watershed. The Missouri Department of Conservation submitted a proposal for land acquisition in the LaBarque Creek Watershed, a "Conservation Opportunity Area" within the State of Missouri's Wildlife Action Plan. About 1,500 acres are already owned by MDC – Young Conservation Area and LaBarque Creek Conservation Area. The remaining land is privately owned. The watershed is primarily wooded, hilly terrain and consists of sandstone, limestone and loess/glacial till communities. The integrity of the watershed is reflected in the clear waters of LaBarque Creek itself, which contains at least 42 species of fish, and the biological diversity of the area makes conservation efforts a high priority. Our Botany Group has been conducting a survey of several parcels of land in private ownership. MDC was awarded \$468,833 for land acquisition in the watershed but the funds have not yet been disbursed. Specific parcel acquisition and use of these funds are subject to approval by the Conservation Commission.

Shafer Farm. The second proposal was submitted by The L-A-D Foundation for the purchase of 139 acres of farm land in Perry County adjacent to the Ball Mill Resurgence Natural Area which was acquired by Leo A. Drey in 1978. The L-A-D Foundation had already acquired some of the Shafer Farm. This grant, in the amount of \$409,500, will allow it to complete the purchase of the entire farm, which lies along the north edge of the Perryville Karst region. By the time this newsletter is in your hands, the \$409,500 will already have been disbursed. L-A-D will work with the Missouri Department of Conservation to manage the land.

History of the Settlement Money: Holcim is constructing a cement plant along the Mississippi River bluffs at the Jefferson County/Ste. Genevieve County line. A limestone quarry is also part of the project. The Corps of Engineers and the Missouri Department of Natural Resources issued permits allowing the project to go forward. WGNSS dropped its opposition to the project in exchange for a settlement of three million dollars paid by Holcim into an escrow account. Holcim also agreed to place approximately 2,000 acres of its land under a conservation easement which is held by the Ozark Regional Land Trust (ORLT). Earlier this year, \$30,000 of the Missouri land funds was awarded to Ozark Regional Land Trust for acquisition of a conservation easement on private property in Jefferson County. All the Missouri land acquisition money has now been awarded. Another \$900,000 is available for land acquisition in Illinois and approximately \$1,000,000 is available for air projects. WGNSS continues to work with three other organizations to identify suitable projects for the remaining settlement funds.



## OCTOBER BIRD REPORT – Jim Ziebol and Yvonne Homeyer

Introduction: A Yellow Rail found at B.K. Leach on 10/6 was the best bird of the month. Prairie Falcon, Long-tailed Jaeger, and Eurasian Goldfinch were also notable. Otherwise the migration was ordinary and uneventful, and the numbers of birds are definitely down.

Sightings: A Common Loon was seen at HL on 10/27 (FH). A juvenile Red-throated Loon, seen at CL on 10/28, was a very good find; a Lesser Black-backed Gull was also seen that day (DK). On 10/2, a Horned Grebe was observed at CCL (D Rogles). Josh Uffman visited Riverlands on 10/28 and found 6 Trumpeter Swans, 3 Franklin's Gulls, and a Bonaparte's Gull. Six Ross's Geese, a few Snow Geese, and thousands of Pintails were seen at B.K. Leach on 10/21 (D Rogles). Also on 10/21, David Rogles observed several White-fronted Geese and Lesser Scaup at Riverlands. By 10/14, many hundreds of Gadwalls, scores of Shovelers, a few Ring-necked Ducks, a few Ruddy Ducks, and one Wigeon were seen at HL (FH). On 10/21, 12 Redheads and 2 juvenile Black-bellied Plovers were observed at Riverlands (JU). By 10/28, 5,000+ Gadwalls were present at HL near the RR tracks along Bend Road, and 30 Killdeer were seen in the HL area (FH). A visit to Riverlands on 10/7 produced 3 Black-bellied Plovers, 1 Willet, Least Sandpipers, 5 Dowitchers sp.?, 3 Pectorals, and 7 Sedge Wrens (D Rogles). The SLAS took a field trip to Riverlands on 10/13, where they observed 4 Long-billed Dowitchers, a juvenile Black-bellied Plover, and a few Vesper Sparrows (N Brown). Some of the lakes are really low at Busch CA, and on 10/2 at Lake 33, Jim Ziebol observed 3 Greater Yellowlegs, Solitary Sandpiper, 3 Snipe, a Baird's Sandpiper, 40 Blue-winged Teal, 2 Green-winged Teal, Gadwalls, Shovelers, and a Green Heron. A Yellow Rail was the target bird of a field trip to BK Leach on 10/6, where one was briefly spotted in flight, along with American Bittern, Marsh Wrens, 14 Soras, and 2 possible Virginia Rails (JU). Dan Kassebaum reported a Long-tailed Jaeger, 3 Sabine's Gulls, and 30 Franklin's Gulls at CL on 10/6. On 10/21, Frank Holmes found 7 Franklin's Gulls at HL, and on 10/22, he reported 100+ Bonaparte's Gulls and 2 Horned Grebes at CL.

On 10/3, 2 Cooper's Hawks were seen drinking at the bubbler in the WGNSS/Gaddy Bird Garden in TGP (GA), and Jean Cook has seen them bathing there. Clarence Zacher reported a Cooper's Hawk at Bissle Point and a Kestrel on N. Broadway on 10/20. A Rough-legged Hawk seen at CL on 10/14 was an early date (DK). The Harlan's Hawk has returned to the tree line at Sand Prairie Lane and it was observed there on 10/28 (FH, JZ). Jurek Majka had a very good look at a Prairie Falcon at B.K. Leach on 10/14. On 10/9, Jim Ziebol and Jean Cook observed a Barred Owl at close range in TGP. Jean Cook also found 2 Golden-crowned Kinglets there that day. Dan Kassebaum found a Scissor-tailed Flycatcher at Flat Branch Road, CL, on 10/14. House Wrens were reported in fairly good numbers, with 2 observed at HL on 10/12 (FH) and 1 seen at FP on 10/19, along with Marsh Wren and Brown Creeper (SM). Chris Ferree observed multiple Marsh Wrens and 10 White-crowned Sparrows at FP on 10/3. On 10/15, Mike Thelen was still seeing dozens of Chimney Swifts in University City.



A Blue-headed Vireo seen at Weldon Springs CA on 10/27 was a little late (Erin Jungbluth, Marvin Staloch). A Cape May Warbler was seen in TGP on 10/6 (RW) and two were seen at HL on 10/7, along with a Yellow-billed Cuckoo (FH). Joe Eades reported 10 species of warblers at TGP on 10/3, including a nice Canada (male). Also on 10/3, a Red-breasted Nuthatch was seen in TGP (GA). The Solodars went to B.K. Leach on 10/6 and found Henslow's Sparrow, Grasshopper Sparrow, and many Swamp and Savannah Sparrows. A Clay-colored Sparrow was observed at B.K. Leach on 10/6 (JE, JU), and one was also seen at Riverlands, along with a Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow, on 10/7 (YH). On 10/14, Frank Holmes observed LeConte's, Lincoln, Chipping, 10 Song, 30 Savannah, 10 Swamp, 1 Henslow's, and White-crowned Sparrows at HL, along with a Catbird, and a Bobolink. David Rogles had a very good morning at the Blue Grosbeak Trail on 10/1, finding LeConte's, Clay-colored, Vesper, Field, a few Lincolns, White-crowned, and Song Sparrows, plus 2 Towhees. Sherry McCowan observed 4 Field, 12 White-throated, Song and Swamp Sparrows in FP on 10/26. A Fox Sparrow was seen at HL on 10/28 (FH). A Spotted Towhee seen by Joe Eades and Connie Alwood in TGP on 10/4 was a very good find. Three Towhees were observed in FP on 10/3 (SM). On 10/20, the Saturday Group went to Busch CA and found Pine Siskins and Purple Finch (D Becher). Four Pine Siskins were found at B.K. Leach on 10/24 (D Rogles). A flock of 100 Goldfinches plus one Pine Siskin were also seen that day in FP (SM). Sherry saw a Purple Finch in FP on 10/25. Jim Jackson found a European Goldfinch at Busch CA on 10/26 (possibly an escaped cage bird). Two Ruby-crowned Kinglets, a Marsh Wren, Swamp and White-throated Sparrows, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker and 2 Pied-billed Grebes were seen in FP on 10/9 (SM). The Sunday Group visited Castlewood SP on 10/14, where they observed Swamp, Song, Lincoln, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Nashville Warbler, Orange-crowned Warbler, Yellow-rumped Warblers, 40 Turkey Vultures, Hairy Woodpecker, and 3 melodious Carolina Wrens (Sherry McCowan and Margy Terpstra, leaders).

A typical day for the Thursday Group on 10/25 included 2 Franklin's Gulls, Redhead, Ruddy Ducks, Gadwall, female Hooded Merganser, Bald Eagle, Double-crested Cormorants at Creve Coeur Lake, and later at Busch CA, they saw 2 Pine Siskins, 3 Purple Finches, House Finch, Goldfinch, an injured Lesser Yellowlegs, a Red-shouldered Hawk, and an adult Cooper's Hawk (Jackie Chain).

A typical day for Riverlands on 10/7 included American Pipit, a juvenile Virginia Rail, an Ibis sp.?, 2 American Bitterns, Soras, Marsh Wren, 4 Sedge Wrens, a "pink-winged" white bird (which turned out to be a leucist Red-winged Blackbird), 5 Palm Warblers, 7 Bobolinks, Vesper Sparrow, 2 Lincoln's Sparrows, 2 White-crowned, many Swamp and Savannah Sparrows, Willet, 2 Short-billed Dowitchers, Ruddy Duck, Bald Eagle (David Scheu). At TGP on 10/7, David saw Wilson's Warbler, Red-breasted Nuthatch, 2 Juncos, and a striking partially leucist Robin.

Back Yard Birds: A House Wren, 2 Indigo Buntings, an Orange-crowned Warbler, a Nashville, and a White-throated Sparrow were seen in Sherry McCowan's yard on 10/9. Sherry also reported Junco, Swamp Sparrow and Common Yellowthroat on 10/16, a House Wren on 10/19, and Junco, Nashville, and an immature Cooper's Hawk on 10/27.

Mike Thelen found an injured Virginia Rail in University City which he took to Wild Bird Rehab on 10/3. Margy Terpstra reported Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Black-throated Green, and a Blue-headed Vireo the week of 10/10. White-throated Sparrows were seen at Clarence Zacher's home on 10/17, and on 10/24, he observed Eurasian Tree Sparrow, White-throated, White-crowned, and a Towhee. Jeannie Moe reported a Red-breasted Nuthatch at her St. Charles home on 10/14, and a Brown Creeper on 10/23. Mark Paradise reported a Red-breasted Nuthatch in mid-October. Kraig Paradise had a fly-over of 6 Pelicans at his home on 10/25.

Contributors: Gail Ahumada, Connie Alwood, David Becher, Jackie Chain, Jean Cook, Joe Eades, Frank Holmes, Yvonne Homeyer, Dan Kassebaum, Sherry McCowan, Mark Paradise, Kraig Paradise, David Rogles, Margy Terpstra, Mike Thelen, Josh Uffman, Rad Widmer, Clarence Zacher, Jim Ziebol.

Abbreviations: BCA, Busch Conservation Area; CC, Clarence Cannon NWR; CL, Carlyle Lake; CSP, Castlewood State Park; CB, Columbia Bottoms; FP, Forest Park; HL, Horseshoe Lake; LP, Lafayette Park; LCCL, Little Creve Coeur Lake; MTC, Marais Temps Clair; RMBS, Riverlands Migratory Bird Sanctuary; SNR, Shaw Nature Reserve; TGP, Tower Grove Park.



Webster Groves Nature Study Society – Founded 1920  
**GROUP ACTIVITY/WALK SCHEDULES**  
November 2007 Update

<u>Date</u>	<u>Meeting Place</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Leader</u>
<b>ORNITHOLOGY – SATURDAY BIRD WALKS – David Becher (314-576-1146)</b> <b>(If destination not given, it's "Where the Birds Are". Always bring lunch.)</b>			
Nov. 17	Riverlands Teal Pond	8 AM	Becher
Nov. 24	Des Park	8 AM	Becher
Dec. 1	Riverlands Teal Pond	8 AM	Becher
Dec. 8	Des Peres Park	8 AM	Becher

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**ORNITHOLOGY – THURSDAY BIRD WALKS – Jackie Chain – Leader (314-644-5998)**

Beginning Thursday, 3 May 2007, the group will begin meeting at 8 AM instead of 8:30 AM. For the first four May Thursdays we will meet at Tower Grove Park at the Maddy Bird Garden in the northwest corner of the park. We suggest parking on Magnolia Avenue. Those "westerners" who wish to carpool may meet at 8 AM at Des Peres Park. Beginning on 31 May **throughout the summer**, we will all resume meeting at Des Peres Park and proceed to where we hope there are birds.

Starting Thursday, 6 September, we will revert to the 8:30 AM meeting time due to school traffic.

For questions prior to birding days, my home phone is 314-644-5998 and my email is [chainjac@sbcglobal.net](mailto:chainjac@sbcglobal.net). Beginning by 7:30 AM on birding days, my cell phone should be turned on at 314-497-1628.

There may need to be changes made down the line due to traffic problems with the onset of I-64/Hwy 40 construction, so stay tuned.

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**BOTANY WALKS – Jeannie Moe – Co-Chair , Co-Leader (636-946-9802)**

**George Yatskievych – Co-Chair (314-577-9522) – Work Phone**  
**Leader – Fr. James Sullivan (starting his 41st yr. in January, 2007)**

Botany walks are on Monday. The Botany group visits many of the same locations as the Bird and Butterfly Groups: Busch Conservation Area, Shaw Nature Preserve, the Missouri Botanical Garden, Babler State Park and Cuivre River State Park. Learning plants will help you learn butterfly host plants. Sign up for Botany Group E-mails from Jack Harris ([jahar@mac.com](mailto:jahar@mac.com)) or 314-368-0655 and receive an E-mail every Sunday, sometimes earlier, about the next Monday's trip.

## ENTOMOLOGY GROUP ACTIVITIES – Rich Thoma, Chair (314-965-6744)

Sunday, November 18 at 7PM - Joe Fortier, St. Louis University professor and WGNSS member will give a talk, titled "*Microcosmos: photographing tiny insect diversity*". This is a great opportunity to see the invisible world of very small insects and to discover their beauty. We will be meeting in Room 142, Biology Department, MacElwane Hall on the campus of St. Louis University. For directions to this event, feel free to contact Richard Thoma at (314-965-6744) or [thomarkas4@sbcglobal.net](mailto:thomarkas4@sbcglobal.net).

Sunday, December 16 at 7PM - Keefe Reuther, winner of the 2006 WGNSS Menke scholarship will give a talk, titled "*Spiders, aphids, and roaches, Oh My!*" -- *Tales of the other social arthropods of North America*". When people think of insect societies, they think of a bee hive, or an ant nest or a termite colony. Keefe will show us that there are many other insects that also have social organizations too. We will be meeting in Room 142, Biology Department, MacElwane Hall on the campus of St. Louis University. For directions to this event, feel free to contact Richard Thoma at (314-965-6744) or [thomarkas4@sbcglobal.net](mailto:thomarkas4@sbcglobal.net).

Sunday, January 27, 2008 at 7:00. Phil Koenig, long time member of WGNSS will talk about "The Search for Rare and Endangered Butterflies from Northwestern Missouri". In the talk, Phil will talk about his three year effort to find populations of butterflies found on Missouri's species of concern checklist. In addition you will have the opportunity to see one of eastern Missouri's premier butterfly collections at this meeting. The meeting will take place at Phil's home, 823 Lauralee in O'Fallon, MO 63366. For directions you may contact Phil at 636-281-1313.



## ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION (Cont'd)

### Making Nature Notes Useful

Nature Notes, the Journal of the Webster Groves Nature Study Society, has long been published because of its utility in furthering the work of the Society. Its most important function is bringing the monthly program of the Society to the members - Stuart O'Byrne, June 1948 issue.

### Supporting Staff

Marjorie Richardson - Newsletter Distribution  
Randy Korotev - Website Manager  
Barbara Perry Lawton - Brochure Coordinator/  
Editor  
Jim Adams - Historian  
Jim Ziebol - Bird Report Compiler  
Jim Ziebol - Busch WA Breeding Bird Survey  
Coordinator  
Jack Harris - Botany Walk Coordinator  
George Van Brunt - Botany Report Compiler

### Call The Nature Line!

This line (314) 935-8432 should no longer be used to report bird sightings, but Sherry McCowan will check the line for messages and will relay them to the appropriate person. Call individual Group leaders if you have questions about walk/activity schedules.

### Nature Notes Deadline and Mailing Info.

The mailing party meets at the Oak Bend Library, 842 S. Holmes, Kirkwood at time noted to prepare N.N. mailings. We could use your help! Call Marjorie Richardson (314) 965-8974 to volunteer. Deadline and mailing party dates for future months are below

NN Deadline	Mailing Party
Fri. 12/7	Mon. 12/17, 10-1, A/P
Mon. 1/14	Tues. 1/22, 10-1, A-P
Mon. 2/11	Tues. 2/19, 1-4, A/P
Mon. 3/10	Mon. 3/17, 10-1, A/P
Mon. 4/14	Mon. 4/21, 10-1, A/P

### Next Board Meeting

Wednesday, Jan. 2, 2008, 7 PM, Powder Valley Nature Center, 11715 Cragwold, 63122, Tel. 314-301-1500. Near I-44/I-270 intersection, enter from Geyer Road. Visitors are welcome. Come see your Board in action!  
(If snowy or icy conditions prevail, call ahead to find if the meeting has been canceled.)

### Publication Policy

Notices/Proposed Articles/Letters to the Editor must be signed to be considered. They will be considered for publication based on content and availability of space. Some editing may be done. Communications from non-member individuals or organizations must include the name and title (if any) of the sender along with a mailing address and telephone number. Send communications to the Editor, 35 Tulip Drive, Webster Groves, MO or transmit via E-mail to [adams9054@sbcglobal.net](mailto:adams9054@sbcglobal.net)

### Copyright Statement

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### Society Objectives

The objectives of the Society are: to stimulate interest in nature study on the part of adults and children; to cooperate with other organizations in nature study; to encourage amateur research in the natural sciences; to promote conservation of wildlife and natural beauty. Open to all with an interest in nature.

*webster groves nature  
study society \*\*\**

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Membership categories (circle one):

Individual or Household.....\$20

For 1<sup>st</sup> class mail.....add \$8

Student.....\$10

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Please mail this form with check to:

Webster Groves Nature Study Society

P.O. Box 190065

St. Louis, MO 63119

Attn: Michael Olson